

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are pending in the application. The Examiner has identified claims 2 and 3 as being allowable if rewritten to be in independent form.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,183,044 to Koyanagi et al. ("Koyanagi") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,354,648 to Allan et al. ("Allan"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection for the following reasons.

The present invention is directed to a vehicle seat having a seat cushion 12 including an upwardly raised portion at its rear end and a connector 17 backwardly extending from a seat base 16 on which a child safety seat 29 is installed and fixed. The connector passes through the seat cushion to connect to a fixation anchor 23 at the side of a vehicle body in the rear of the vehicle seat so as to fix the child safety seat. The vehicle seat includes a seat cushion pad 12A at the rear end of the seat cushion, a sub-cushion portion 14 attached to the seat cushion pad to complete the seat cushion, and a through hole 22, through which the connector inserted from a front face of the vehicle seat is allowed to project from its back face. The through hole is formed so that the sub-cushion portion is attached to the seat cushion pad. The fixation anchor connected to the connector is positioned on an axis of the through hole.

The Examiner states that Koyanagi discloses all of the features of the claimed invention except for a sub-cushion portion attached to the seat cushion pad, but that Allan discloses this feature.

Koyanagi discloses a child seat installed onto a vehicle seat 20 having a seat cushion 22 and a seat back 24 (Koyanagi, column 2, lines 65-67). A pair of arms 52 extends backwardly from a child seat base 18 on which a child seat main portion is detachably fixed and the arms 52 are connected to clamping bars 74 provided of a rear portion of the vehicle seat 20 (Koyanagi, column 3, lines 1-2 and 34-36). Koyanagi does not expressly define the location or depth of a through hole

through which the arms 52 are inserted. However, Fig. 5 shows that the arms 52 are inserted through the vehicle seat 20 to connect to the clamping bars 74 provided at the rear of the seat 20.

Allan discloses a mounting for a child restraint system in a vehicle. The mount includes a base portion 16 secured to the vehicle structure and a mounting portion 17 extending so that it can be engaged by a restraint system via mounting elements 25.

Although the Examiner states that Koyanagi discloses the seat cushion 22 having an upwardly raised portion 24 at a rear end thereof, and the seat cushion pad (outer cover of the seat cushion) which is around the rear end of the seat cushion, the raised portion 24 is merely a backrest, and is not part of the seat cushion as in the present invention. The seat cushion is not an outer cover of the seat cushion, and the applied references do not suggest the seat cushion having an upwardly raised portion.

Further, Applicant disagrees with the Examiner's contention that Allan discloses a sub-cushion portion attached to the seat cushion pad. The Examiner states that it would be obvious to employ Allan's mounting portion in Koyanagi's seat cushion to provide alternative anchors for connecting to the seat base. However, Allan's base portion 16 and mounting portion 17 are not cushions and therefore cannot constitute a sub-cushion portion attached to a seat cushion pad. As shown in Fig. 1 of Allan, the cushions of the vehicle seat are cushion portion 10 and backrest portion 11. Allan's base portion 16 is formed as a plate 18 that is bolted to the vehicle floor 15 (Allan, column 3, lines 29-36), and therefore, cannot be construed as a seat cushion pad. Allan's mounting portion 17 is formed with a slot for mounting onto the base portion 16 and includes mounting elements 25 to engage the child safety seat (Allan, column 3, lines 53-55). Allan does not disclose that the mounting portion 17 is a cushion portion. Therefore, neither Allan nor Koyanagi disclose or suggest "a sub-cushion portion attached to the seat cushion pad to complete the seat cushion," as set forth in claim 1.

Additionally, Koyanagi does not clarify a position of the through hole of the cushion, and Allan's anchor is located on the attaching portion 17. Thus, neither of the applied references, alone

or in combination, discloses that the fixation anchor is located on an axis of the through hole, as required by the claims.

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-3 are patentable over the applied references. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the prior art rejection is respectfully requested.

Applicant has added new dependent claims 4-6 to more fully define the invention. Claim 4 states that the sub-cushion portion and the seat cushion portion are formed of a pad material. Claim 5 sets forth a guide 25 inserted into the through hole and extending from the front face toward the back face of the vehicle seat. Claim 6 states that the through hole is formed in the seat cushion pad.

In view of the above, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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